

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application. Claims 8 and 16 have been cancelled without prejudice in the previous Amendment of November 16, 2004. Claims 1, 3, 4, 7, 9-11, and 13 have been amended as indicated below.

Listing of Claims

1. (currently amended) A retainer for immobilizing a bucket against rotational and other movements during a time that material contained within the bucket is mixed, comprising:

a retainer ring having a vertical axis which forms a cylindrically-shaped socket into which the bucket may be placed; with the ring having a forward portion, diametrically opposite side portions and a rear portion;

a laterally outwardly extending, generally flat wing formed on each of the opposite side portions of the ring;

each wing extending along [its] that wing's respective ring side portion rearwardly of the ring a sufficient distance for supporting a foot of a user of the retainer which is positioned upon said wing so that the feet of the user are on opposite sides of the ring rear portion and the user's body is arranged upright and generally parallel to, and spaced rearwardly of, the vertical axis of the ring, and the body of the user is generally rearwards of said rear portion of the ring whereby a mixer held by the user will extend substantially vertically downwardly approximately into the center of a bucket arranged within the ring[.];

said ring having an interior, circularly-shaped wall surface having upper and lower edges, which taper downwardly and inwardly from the upper to the lower edges, relative to the axis of the ring, with the diameter of the upper edge being larger than the anticipated diameter of [a] the bucket and the diameter of the lower edge, and the diameter of the lower edge being smaller than the anticipated diameter of the bucket;

whereby [a] the bucket containing material to be mixed, ~~such as liquid paint,~~ is inserted in the socket so that the bucket engages and frictionally locks to portions of the inner surface of the wall, and the user of the retainer may step upon the wings to firmly press the wings and, thereby, hold the retainer, against a surface upon which the retainer may be positioned, and to position the user generally over the bucket so that the user may insert and hold a mixing device in the bucket for mixing the material while simultaneously holding the bucket against rotational or other movements that might otherwise have occurred if the bucket were free to move.

2. (previously presented) A retainer for immobilizing a bucket, as defined in Claim 1 above, comprising:

said ring wall being formed of a resilient, plastic material, which compresses radially inwardly against the bucket for frictionally gripping the bucket and holding said bucket against movement relative to the ring.

3. (currently amended) A retainer for immobilizing a bucket, during the time that the content of the bucket is mixed, as defined in Claim 1 above, comprising:

and said interior wall surface being tapered to provide a Morse taper of approximately 2 degrees, so that the diametrically opposite portions of the wall surface, that is, on opposite diametric ends of the bucket, together provide an internal taper of approximately 4 degrees for locking the wall-engaged portions of the bucket against movement relative to the socket.

4. (currently amended) A retainer for immobilizing a bucket, as defined in Claim 1 above, comprising:

said taper of the ring interior wall surface being formed with a Morse taper of a slope angle which frictionally locks the bucket to the wall surface to prevent the bucket from rotational or other movement during the mixing of material contained in the bucket.

5. (original) A retainer for immobilizing a bucket, as defined in Claim 1, comprising:

said wings being formed with flat upper surfaces upon which the user's feet may be positioned, and with the lower surfaces of said wings having downwardly extending protuberances for engaging against a ground support surface upon which the retainer is positioned.

6. (previously presented) A retainer for immobilizing a bucket, as defined in Claim 1, comprising:

and the interior wall of said wing being formed with at least two coaxial upper and lower generally cylindrically shaped tapered portions, with the upper cylindrically shaped tapered portion being of a larger diameter than the lower cylindrically shaped tapered portion, and thereby forming different diameter socket portions, so that at least two different diameter buckets may be engaged by, and retained within, the socket portions within which the bucket more closely fits.

7. (currently amended) A retainer for immobilizing a bucket, during the time that the contents of the bucket are mixed, or to prevent accidental tipping or rotation of the bucket, comprising:

a ring having a vertical axis formed of two thin, concentric, generally cylindrically-walls joined together along their upper edges and being free of each other at their lower edges to thereby form a circular socket having [an] inner and outer [wall] walls; and with the ring having opposite side portions and a rear portion;

said inner wall having an inner wall surface that is tapered downwardly and radially inwardly from [its] the upper edge to [its] the lower edge of said wall surface and being of a diameter to receive and hold a predetermined size bucket with the bucket engaging the inner wall inner surface and being frictionally gripped by the inner wall;

said outer wall having radially outwardly extending wing portions thereon and forming foot supports on opposite sides of the ring, with each wing having a generally flat, horizontal, upper surface of a size to accommodate a foot of a user of the retainer for pressing down and clamping the respective wing down against a support

surface on which the retainer is positioned and with the wing portions extending from about their respective ring side portions rearwardly of the ring a sufficient distance to underlay a user's foot and the wings converging towards each other at an angle for positioning the user's feet at a diverging angle along the rear and side portions of the ring with the user's body generally adjacent the rear portion of the ring for holding a mixer generally in front of the user's body down into the ring and, thereby, preventing movement of the retainer relative to the support surface and correspondingly holding [a] the bucket inserted within the retainer socket against movements during the time the contents of the retainer are mixed.

8. (cancelled)

9. (currently amended) A retainer as defined in Claim 7, and with the interior surface of the interior wall defining the socket being provided with a ~~Morse~~ taper of a slope angle which frictionally locks the bucket to said wall surface for preventing the bucket from rotational movement during the mixing.

10. (currently amended) A retainer as defined Claim 9, above, and including said ~~Morse~~ taper being approximately 2 degrees so as to provide an approximately 4 degree-taper for diametrically opposite surfaces of the socket.

11. (currently amended) A retainer as defined in Claim 7, above, and including said retainer being formed of a slightly resilient plastic material so that the inner wall of

the socket expands outwardly slightly upon insertion of [a] the bucket into the socket and, therefore, exerts a radially inwardly directed force which grips the bucket radially inwardly and holds the bucket against rotational movement within the socket.

12. (previously presented) A retainer as defined in Claim 7, and with the interior wall of said ring being formed with at least two coaxial upper and lower, generally cylindrically-shaped, tapered portions with the upper cylindrically-shaped tapered portion being of a larger diameter than the lower cylindrically-shaped tapered portion, to thereby form upper and lower socket portions of different diameters whereby at least two different sized buckets may be inserted within and retained within the particular socket portion within which each bucket most clearly fits.

13. (currently amended) A retainer for immobilizing a bucket against rotational and lateral movements and accidental tipping during the time that material contained within the bucket is mixed or used or transported, comprising:

a horizontally arranged, retainer ring having a vertical axis which forms a cylindrically-shaped socket of a size to receive and surround the circumference of a bucket which may be placed therein; with the ring having a forward portion, opposite side portions and a rear portion, and a lateral central diametrical axis extending between said side portions;

said ring having an interior, circularly-shaped wall surface having upper and lower edges, which taper downwardly and inwardly from the upper to the lower edges of said wall surface, relative to the axis of the ring, with the diameter of the upper edge being larger than the anticipated diameter of a bucket and the diameter of the

lower edge, and the diameter of the lower edge being smaller than the anticipated diameter of the bucket;

a laterally outwardly extending, generally flat wing formed on each of the side portions and each wing extending from about the central diametrical axis of its respective side portion a distance rearwardly of the ring rear portion, the wings being of sufficient size to underlay and support a user's foot;

whereby [a] the bucket containing a liquid material, such as liquid paint, is inserted in the socket so that the bucket engages and frictionally locks to portions of the inner surface of the wall, and the user of the retainer may stand upon the wings with the user's feet arranged close to the adjacent ring side portions and extending rearwardly of the ring rear portion to firmly press the wing and, thereby, hold the retainer, against a support surface upon which the retainer may be positioned, and to position the user closely adjacent the rear portion of, and with the user's feet on opposite sides of the ring and the bucket so that the weight of the user clamps the retainer against the support surface while the ring is arranged generally forwardly of the user's body.

14. (previously presented) A retainer for immobilizing a bucket, as defined in Claim 13, comprising:

said ring wall being formed of a resilient, plastic material, which compresses radially inwardly against the bucket for frictionally gripping the bucket and holding said bucket against movement relative to the ring.

15. (original) A retainer for immobilizing a liquid containing bucket during the time that the liquid contents of the bucket is mixed, as defined in Claim 13, comprising:

said taper of the ring interior wall surface being formed with a downwardly and radially inwardly sloping taper of a slope angle which frictionally locks the bucket to the wall surface to prevent the bucket from rotational or other movement relative to the retainer during the mixing.

16. (cancelled)

17. (previously presented) A retainer for immobilizing a bucket, as defined in Claim 1, comprising:

and the interior wall of said wing being formed with coaxial upper and lower generally cylindrically shaped tapered portions, with the upper portion being of a larger diameter than the lower portion for forming different diameter socket portions for receiving and retaining different diameter buckets.